





The Senate was evenly divided when it met in special session in March 1881, and both parties bid for the two independent senators. The portly David Davis, Independent from Illinois, seen seated at the right, announced that he would vote with the Democrats. Democrats could retain the majority if they also gained the vote of Senator William Mahone, an Independent who represented a faction of the Democratic Party in Virginia. Senate Republicans similarly wooed Mahone with patronage. On March 18, 1881, Mahone voted with the Republicans. Vice President Chester Arthur cast the tie-breaking vote that enabled Republicans to organize the Senate.

James Wales's cartoon about the unseemly bidding war appeared in *Puck* close to a month after the fateful vote. The cartoon remained timely, as the battle for control continued to disrupt Senate business until adjournment in late May of that year. Ominously, Republican New York Senator Roscoe Conkling, whip in hand, can be seen issuing orders to his faithful lieutenant, Vice President Chester Arthur. 🏹



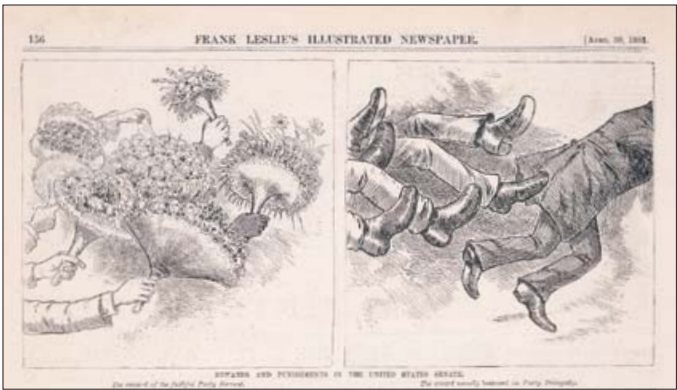
**This Is Not the New York Stock Exchange, It Is the Patronage Exchange, Called U.S. Senate.**

Unidentified after James A. Wales  
*Puck*, 04/13/1881  
 Lithograph, colored  
 11 ¾ x 18 ¾ inches (29.8 x 47.6 cm)  
 Cat. no. 38.00519.001



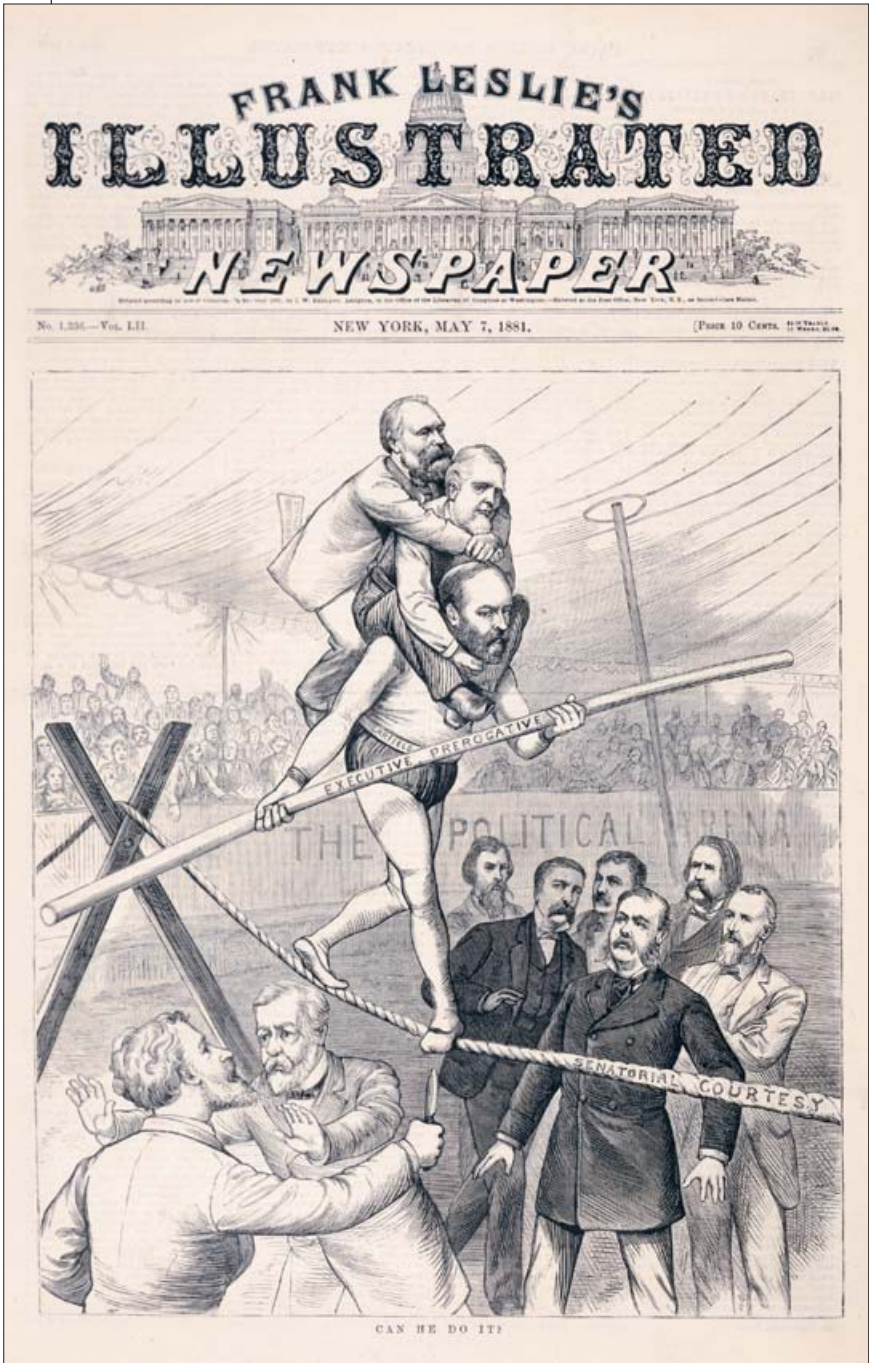
**Waiting.**

Unidentified after James A. Wales  
*Puck*, 04/20/1881  
Lithograph, colored  
8 ¼ x 8 ¾ inches (21.0 x 22.2 cm)  
Cat. no. 38.00599.003



**Rewards and Punishments in the United States Senate.**

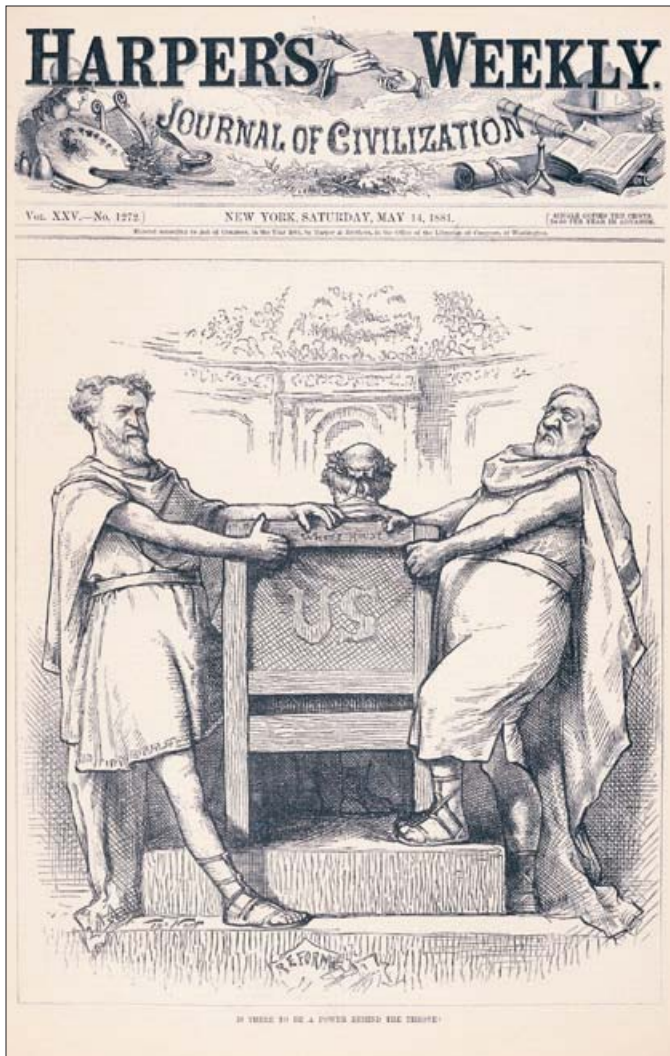
Unidentified  
*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 04/30/1881  
Wood engraving, black and white  
5 x 9 ⅜ inches (12.7 x 23.8 cm)  
Cat. no. 38.00873.001



**Can He Do It?**

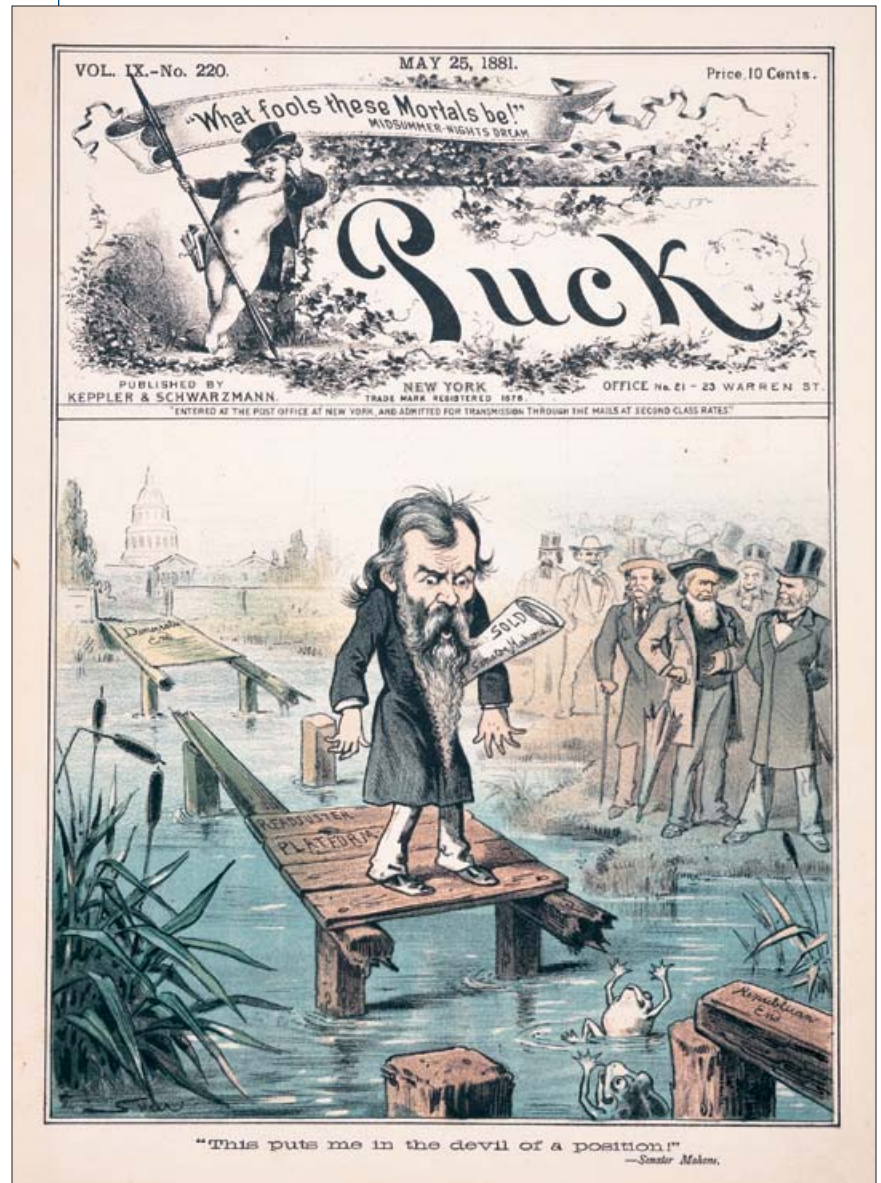
Unidentified  
*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 05/07/1881  
Wood engraving, black and white  
11 ⅞ x 9 ¼ inches (28.3 x 23.5 cm)  
Cat. no. 38.00822.001





**Is There to Be a Power behind the Throne?**

Unidentified after Thomas Nast  
*Harper's Weekly*, 05/14/1881  
 Wood engraving, black and white  
 11 x 9 ¼ inches (27.9 x 23.5 cm)  
 Cat. no. 38.00687.001



**"This Puts Me in the Devil of a Position!"**

Unidentified  
*Puck*, 05/25/1881  
 Lithograph, colored  
 8 ¼ x 8 ½ inches (21.0 x 21.6 cm)  
 Cat. no. 38.00520.001